

Networking opportunities in the professional development of early childhood education and care professionals



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Abstract

Networking as a learning strategy is an area of development in many education and training systems. Apart from creating an opportunity for deeper learning through the exchange of knowledge and ideas, and fostering innovation, it provides opportunities for the development of interpersonal, intrapersonal, metacognitive, civic, and digital competences. One form of networking in professional development is a professional learning network that represents a system of interpersonal connections and resources that support non-formal learning.

Networking as an important aspect of individual professional development. To professionals, lifelong learning is usually a process that takes place within the early and preschool learning institution with a colleague from the shared classroom or the classroom within the institution. In addition, it can take place through internal professional training, professional learning network or continuous professional training outside the institution.

The aim of this research was to establish the attitudes of experts in the field of early childhood education and care on networking as a learning strategy and to explore the experiences of participants with networking. The participants in the survey were 161 experts in Split-Dalmatia County. Quantitative (descriptive) and qualitative data analysis was applied. The results show that early childhood education and care professionals have networking experience but are often not familiar with the term itself, as well as with all the areas and possibilities. In conclusion, although participants have networking experience within the institution and local community, the concept of networking in professional development needs to be made more visible precisely because of the possibilities it provides.

Key words

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Odgoj i obrazovanje za osobni i profesionalni razvoj

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Sažetak

Umrežavanje kao strategija učenja predstavlja područje razvoja u brojnim sustavima odgoja i obrazovanja. Osim što stvara priliku za dublje učenje kroz razmjenu znanja i ideja, te poticanje inovativnosti, pruža mogućnosti razvoja interpersonalnih, interpersonalnih, metakognitivnih, građanskih i digitalnih kompetencija. Jedan od oblika umrežavanja u profesionalnom razvoju jest zajednica učenja koja predstavlja sustav međuljudskih veza i resursa koje podržavaju neformalno učenje.

Umrežavanje kao važan aspekt profesionalnoga razvoja pojedinca i cjeloživotnoga učenja stručnjacima najčešće predstavlja proces koji se odvija unutar ustanove s kolegicom/om u odgojnoj skupini ili pak u susjednoj grupi. Uz navedeno ostvaruje se i kroz interna stručna usavršavanja, zajednice učenja ili pak neke cikluse stručnih usavršavanja izvan ustanove.

Cilj ovoga istraživanja bio je utvrditi stavove stručnjaka u području ranoga i predškolskoga odgoja i obrazovanja o umrežavanju kao strategiji učenja te istražiti iskustva sudionika s umrežavanjem. U istraživanju je sudjelovao 161 stručnjak na području Splitsko-dalmatinske županije, korištene su kvantitativna (deskriptivna) i kvalitativna analiza podataka. Rezultati ukazuju kako stručnjaci ranoga i predškolskoga odgoja i obrazovanja imaju iskustvo umrežavanja, ali često nisu upoznati sa samim terminom kao i svim područjima i mogućnostima istoga. Zaključno, iako sudionici imaju iskustvo umrežavanja unutar ustanove i lokalne zajednice, koncept umrežavanja u profesionalnom razvoju potrebno je učiniti vidljivijim upravo zbog mogućnosti koje ono pruža.

Ključne riječi

cjeloživotno učenje; iskustva; kompetencije 21. stoljeća; stavovi; zajednica učenja.

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